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## **Rethink Your Reaction When Stress Gets the Better of You**

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One of the best ways to help prevent child abuse is to help families find positive ways to deal with frustration, anger, and tension that can be part of daily life.

Let's face it, some days being a parent can be frustrating. There's always so much to do, and everything just seems to get in your way.

Taking a minute to rethink your reaction is a positive way to keep stress from getting the better of you. Things as simple as keeping a sense of humor, taking time to laugh together and talking to your kids can help you manage pressure or anxiety, and let's you grow closer as a family.

Everyday activities can reinforce your connection to your children. Share a family meal together. If it's impossible to do every night, schedule a regular weekly family dinner night that works with everyone's schedule. Spend time together. Even time spent driving or walking the dog together offers chances for your kids to talk about what's on their minds. Get involved, be involved, and stay involved. Go to games, plays and practices when you can. Ask about homework and school projects. And don't forget to set clear limits. Teens still need your guidance, but you can involve them in setting rules and consequences.

Good parenting also means knowing when it's time to reach out for help or advice. Local Child Abuse Prevention Councils are just one of the resources that can help you stay on top of stress and keep you and your kids moving forward as a family.

Remember, you're not alone when you've run out of answers and frustration and anger start building up. Think about who you can ask for support. Family, friends, neighbors, teachers, doctors, and other parents can be great sources of information and encouragement.

Another good resource is 2-1-1 if it's available in your area, and don't forget the Nebraska Family Helpline, 1-888-866-8660, if you're experiencing a challenging behavioral health situation involving your children. In many cases, help is only a phone call away.